

ORF Style Guide

Use British English and not American English

- *s* instead of *z*: *emphasise, analyse*
- *our* instead of *or*: *labour, neighbour*
- *adviser* instead of *advisor*
- **Exception:** *focused* and *focuses* instead of *focussed* and *focusses*
- **Exception:** quotations or extracts (maintain original spellings)

ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS:

- No periods, all caps: *UN, NATO, WTO, COMESA, ASEAN*
- Spell out for the first time and use acronym thereafter.
- No apostrophe before 's' in the plural form (NPPs, UAVs)
- Use article before acronym depending on how it sounds (a NATO mission, an MOX plant)
- When the acronym can be read out like a word, do not use the article 'the' before it (WHO, BRICS); use 'a' and 'an' appropriately if it is used as an adjective (a WHO programme)

CAPITALISATION

- Use only when necessary
- Not to be used in the general sense:
 - The Indian government/the government vs. Government of India
 - The defence ministry vs. Ministry of Defence
 - The army vs. the Indian Army
 - The State of Lebanon vs. the Lebanese state
 - Before Partition (the event) vs. the partition of India (the verb)
- Capitalise a region (the global South, Far East Russia, India's Northeast, the West) **but not** when describing a direction (western Tibet, southern France)
- Designations are capitalised when used as a prefix to the name (Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee), but in lower case otherwise (the Indian prime minister). Similarly, for ministries and organisations, capitals are used when the full title is used, as in Ministry of Defence, but not when it is defence ministry
- Capitalise: specific terms like the Indian Army, Indian Air Force or Indian Navy. **Do not capitalise** words army, navy etc. – they are in lower case when standing alone or not part of an official title
- Capitalise: the Second World War, First World War
- In regular title capitalisation (headline style), the first and last words and all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs and subordinating conjunctions (if, because, as, that) are capitalised.

- Articles (a, an, the), coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor) and prepositions, regardless of length, are lowercased unless they are the first or last word of the title or subtitle.

CENTURIES AND DECADES

- Spell out (in lower case) references to centuries. Decades may be spelt out or written numerically with apostrophes. Eg: The twentieth century; during the eighties and nineties/ the '80s and '90s.
- If decades are identified by their century, numerals are used. Eg: The 1880s/ 1990s. No apostrophe is needed between the years and the 's'.

CURRENCIES

- Format: US\$100, 100 euro, INR 100, £100
- Keep unit consistent
- If more than one denomination used, provide equivalent in primary currency

DATES

- Day Month Year format: *5 September 1990*
- When referring to collective period of years, no apostrophe before the 's'.
Eg: *during the 1990s, in the 60s*
- Years without commas: 1908

FULL POINT

- Use periods in the case of initials, as in S.S. Gill
- Abbreviations and contractions consisting of upper and lower cases take full points as in Mt. (Mount) St. (Saint) Ph.D (Doctor of Philosophy), exceptions to be made for Rs, Dr (Doctor) Revd (Reverend: not Rev), Mr, Mrs, Mme, Mlle (Mademoiselle), Prof, Col, where full points are not required

ITALICS

- Use of italics should be kept to the minimum.
- Italicise: Names of books and journals.
- Italicise: Non-English words, but only the first use. Succeeding uses will not be italicised.
- Italicise: Titles of plays, films, TV shows
- Do not italicise: titles of articles, Ph.D theses, and unpublished material.
- Do not italicise: the Bible, the Koran, the Bhagavad Gita, the like.
- Adjectives derived from the names of sacred books are generally lower cased (biblical, scriptural), but a few retain the initial capital like Koranic or Vedic
- Avoid using 'etc.' when listing examples. Give the examples, and preface the last one with an 'and'.

- *et al.* is always in italics. Other non-English words, as in Hindi, French, Latin, and others, will be italicised. Follow the dictionary rule.

NUMBERS

- Spell out numbers from one to nine; use numerals thereafter (*one-nine; 10-...*) **except** when number is part of a measurement (*5 kWh, US\$2 billion*)
- Avoid using Indian number system unless context-specific (*100,000* instead of *1,00,000*)
- Commas in thousands: *1,840*
- Hyphenate fractions: *one-third, two-thirds, one-sixth* **except** one quarter
- When both a whole number and a fraction are spelt out, use a hyphen only in the fraction, as in one and three-quarters.
- Decimal numbers are always in numerals, as in 1.05.
- In decimals use the full point. Eg: 7.06, 0.76 (not .76)
- In scientific and statistical copy use the symbol % for a percentage no space between numeral and symbol – 35%); in humanistic copy, the word percent should be used (one word and not two)
- Distances, weights, measures, as in miles, kilometres, pounds, kilograms, feet, inches are usually indicated in words, although long or complicated figures can be given in numerals.
- Roman numerals to be preferred in such cases as Krishnaraya II – which are not to be broken up in mid-sentence and are not be followed by a full point except at the end of a sentence.
- Use figures in 9.00 a.m., words in nine o'clock, no hyphen in half past nine

PUNCTUATION

- Single space after periods
- Do not overuse commas (for example, delete unnecessary commas after 'that' or 'while')
- Asking a question:
 - Frame it either as a question: Will the government deliver? Can India find a way to engage with China in Afghanistan?
 - Or, if being written as a normal sentence: The question to ask is **if** the
 - government will deliver. The question that arises is **whether** India can find a way to engage with China in Afghanistan.
- Colons and semi-colons: Ensure you are using the right punctuation mark. Do not overuse them.
- Hyphens: Add when using a term as an adjective before a noun (A long-term plan) **but** not otherwise (the plan is long term)
- Use double quotes for quotations; single quotes to emphasise a term or phrase
- Keep quotation marks and endnotes outside the period or comma: *The*

*term increasingly being used is 'Beijing Consensus.'*¹ *According to the latest NASSCOM report,¹ ...*

OTHER RULES

- Phrases with 'such as' and 'including' **never** end with 'etc.' or 'among others' Eg: The indicators include level of urbanisation and migration trends **NOT** The indicators include level of urbanisation, migration trends, **etc.**
- Countries (and ships) are 'it' and 'which' **not** 'she' or 'who'
- No 'the' before a country's name unless plural names (the UAE, the US, the Philippines)
- Know the difference between 'would' and 'will'; 'could' and 'can'; 'might' and 'may'.
- Avoid using 'Also' at the beginning of sentences. Use other conjunctions instead (further, moreover, in addition...) but avoid overusing them as well.
- Avoid using 'But' at the beginning of sentences. Use 'However', instead. Even better to move the 'however' after the opening brief phrase.
- Avoid using 'in fact'.
- Avoid using 'Interestingly'. Assume that because you are writing it in your piece, it IS interesting.
- Avoid repetition of words, phrases, punctuation.
- **Do not use:**
 - Hence (antiquated)
 - Discuss about / mention about (no 'about' needed)
 - 20 years *back* (use 'ago')
 - In order to (it suffices to simply say 'to')
 - It is not... rather, it is.... (use 'instead')
 - 'besides' when using it as to mean 'also,' 'in any case,' or 'anyway'